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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 WELLINGTON 000646

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STATE FOR EAP A/S HILL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [US](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: YOUR VISIT AND EXPANDING US-NZ COOPERATION

Classified By: Charge David J. Keegan, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[¶1.](#) (C) SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION. Since your last visit to New Zealand, we have seen an unprecedented improvement in dialogue and cooperation between the United States and New Zealand on a range of security and foreign policy objectives, culminating in the successful visit of New Zealand PM Clark to Washington in February 2007. The stage is set for continued cooperation that will expand the range of issues on which we cooperate and solidify the pattern of consultation and joint planning. Opportunities include: defense; Pacific Island affairs; border security and information sharing, including on Trafficking in Persons; a TIFA work program to clear away obstacles blocking an eventual FTA; democracy initiatives; transformational diplomacy on dialogue with Islamic religious leaders; and continuing cooperation in science, especially in Antarctica. In addition, new opportunities for cooperation lie in working with New Zealand on UN reform and transparency, and encouraging NZ to encourage political transformation in ASEAN, particularly Burma.

[¶2.](#) (C) Although the coming year will see national elections on both sides, we believe both sides are committed to cooperation. Your meetings with NZ leaders will help propel the agenda forward. END SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION.

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
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[¶3.](#) (C) We have established a solid record of bilateral cooperation and the basis for continued cooperation. Our two militaries have discussed how to expand cooperation and advance our shared security objectives in the South Pacific and beyond. We cooperated closely in response to the coup in Fiji. Foreign Minister Winston Peters has taken a very strong public position in support of U.S. strategic objectives, particularly in the Six Party Talks.

[¶4.](#) (C) On August 10, New Zealand's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) found a mutually acceptable solution to U.S. sovereignty requirements barring access by foreign officials to U.S. official aircraft, while still meeting New Zealand's bio-security requirements. MAF initially developed this new procedure within a single day to accommodate the unexpected arrival of a USAF C-17.

[¶5.](#) (C) The celebration of the International Polar Year was marked in January, 2007 by Prime Minister Helen Clark leading a delegation of New Zealand and U.S. senior officials,

including National Science Foundation President Dr. Arden Bement, OES A/S Claudia McMurray, and EAP DAS Glyn Davies to the Antarctic. The following month, Prime Minister Helen Clark met the President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense during her first visit to Washington in four years. The year was bracketed by the PM's participation in the Embassy's July 4 celebration in 2007 and in opening a permanent exhibition in Wellington's Old Saint Paul's Cathedral on Memorial Day, 2007 commemorating the valor of the U.S. Marines of the Second Marine Division who encamped in New Zealand to prepare for the campaign to retake the Pacific Islands during World War II.

¶6. (C) Both governments committed to set to one side the major issues, which had divided us -- including access for US Navy ships and the war in Iraq -- not forgetting them, but choosing to focus on moving forward in a cooperative way. A third irritant has been New Zealand's continued public pleading for a Free Trade Agreement with the United States. New Zealand leaders have made it clear that they will moderate their public statements but remain committed to this objective. New Zealand's interest in an FTA has provided a significant impetus to continued dialogue and cooperation, in this case in reducing trade barriers that might obstruct eventual bilateral free trade arrangements.

HOW DO WE ADVANCE IN THE COMING YEAR?  
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¶7. (C) Your visit to Auckland to participate in the United States New Zealand Partnership Forum September 10 will offer the opportunity to meet with GNZ ministers and senior officials to discuss key objectives for the coming year. The

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following is a selection of objectives which we have developed in consultation with our colleagues at MFAT.

-- Exchanges  
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¶8. (C) "Working Holiday" Visas. Following an exchange of drafts over the past two months, you are scheduled to participate in a ceremony to sign a bilateral arrangement. Details of the signing are still being worked out.

-- Security  
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¶9. (C) OSD and the NZ Defence Force have begun more specific discussions on areas where improved NZDF capabilities could advance shared objectives. NZ has made it clear that it is eager to cooperate, but they are seeking to focus on initiatives that are sustainable. Practically, this means looking at NZDF unit deployments in the Pacific Islands, East Timor, and Afghanistan. NZ understands US interest in future SAS deployments to Afghanistan, but they have expressed reluctance to make any commitments given their limited resources.

¶10. (C) NZ knows that we are engaged in an internal effort to clarify the ground rules about expanded contacts between the two militaries. They are likely aware that this blocked because of internal USG disagreement on how to handle NZDF participation in NATO activities.

¶11. (C) In the meantime, we have found ways to engage with NZ that continue improving our mil-mil relationship. Just this month, a NZ medical team boarded the USS Pelelieu for a short medical assistance deployment to several South Pacific nations, including Solomon Islands. A NZ deployment of a medical team had been disapproved just two years ago. Additionally, two NZ junior naval officers were deployed onboard USCG Cutter Walnut for an operational maritime patrol of the South Pacific including Solomon Islands and Samoa. Feedback from both vessels has been very positive.

-- South Pacific Regional Cooperation

¶12. (C) Cooperation on good governance, development and security in the South Pacific incorporates a number of areas, several of which proved to be major elements of our cooperation over the past year. New Zealand leaders will be eager to exchange views in a number of areas: Fiji Democratization, expectations for the PIF and Partners Dialogue, expanded maritime law enforcement cooperation, including fisheries, illicit narcotics, alien smuggling, firearms smuggling and violence in maritime navigation. Finally, these specific discussions are naturally evolving into a broader effort to coordinate support for governance, development, and democracy across the South Pacific region.

-- Economic and Trade Issues

¶13. (C) The July 9 - 10 TIFA meeting between USTR and MFAT concluded with agreement that the two sides would develop a cooperative work plan to address specific trade issues, including the possibility of expanding P-4 (NZ, Singapore, Brunei, Chile) FTA as the basis for US-NZ free trade, and resolving agricultural market access issues, including market access for biotech.

-- Democracy, Governance, and "Counter-radicalization"

¶14. (C) The U.S. and NZ sides share a strongly rooted commitment to democracy, human rights, and diversity. We are currently seeking NZ's commitment and support in both the Asia Democracy Partnership and the OECD Partnership for Democratic Governance. New Zealand has been clear that it endorses both efforts in concept and is prepared to support as feasible. PM Clark has made inter-faith dialogue a central part of New Zealand's efforts to counter radicalization by helping to generate support for moderate Islamic leaders, especially in Southeast Asia. She has personally identified this as a strategy which will improve New Zealand's national

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security.

¶15. (C) Discussions between DHS and NZ Immigration and Customs have expanded over the past nine months, focusing particularly on expanded intelligence sharing. Bilateral discussions prior to the issuance of the most recent State Department TIP report highlighted the impact of New Zealand's ongoing policy revision on TIP and specifically its effort to enhance cross-ministry cooperation and the involvement of NGOs. If DHS Secretary Chertoff does visit in January 2008 en route to the Antarctic that will offer an opportunity to highlight this cooperation.

-- Science and Technology

¶16. (C) Throughout this year scientific and technical cooperation will remain an enduring foundation of bilateral cooperation, as it has over the past twenty years. PM Clark has spoken enthusiastically on a number of occasions about her visit to the ice this past January, and DHS Secretary Chertoff has expressed interest in visiting Antarctica this coming January.

-- New Initiatives

¶17. (C) We believe there are a few significant additional opportunities for expanded dialogue, which we will be exploring in coming months.

-- Encouraging New Zealand to push for greater UN

Transparency. The Kiwis have always made the activities of international organizations a central focus of its foreign policy. Both the New Zealand and the United States share a common commitment to seeing international organizations operate with greater transparency. There may be reform and transparency issues especially in the UN where New Zealand may be able to exert leverage far beyond its size on issues we care about, and NZ officials have tentatively expressed interest in cooperating in this area.

-- Cooperation in Southeast Asia. The USG and NZ governments have similar objectives regarding the promotion of within ASEAN. Despite the lack of NZ diplomatic missions in some ASEAN capitals, they might be willing to help push our messages and consider deploying additional official visitors to assist us with respect to pressing for stronger ASEAN action on human rights, democracy and good governance, particularly in Burma.

-- Disaster Preparation and other Intergovernmental Visits. The New Zealand Embassy is interested in pursuing discussions between relevant government agencies on as-yet untouched issues - one example could be discussions with FEMA on disaster responses.

#### Conclusion

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118. (C) Your visit offers us an opportunity to establish a program that will build on the progress of the past year. Clearly there will be limiting factors, including elections in both countries. The New Zealand government is required to call elections by the fall of 2008, but there are some reports that it may move as early as the spring. NZ Foreign Minister Winston Peters' visit in conjunction with the opening of the UN General Assembly, and the second year of the celebration of fifty years of NZ-US cooperation in Antarctica, in January 2008, will offer opportunities to consult about our progress as the year moves forward. I look forward to seeing you in Auckland.  
KEEGAN